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STUDENT SCIENTISTS FLY HIGH WITH NASA

Students from nine states are taking their quest for exploration to new levels, as they launch school science experiments aboard a NASA suborbital rocket on June 9.

The single stage rocket will carry the experiments nearly 27 miles above the Earth. During the flight the experiments will be exposed to the rigors of space including temperature changes, radiation exposure and forces 15 times greater than Earth's gravity.

The rocket is scheduled for launch between 6 and 10 a.m. EDT, from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility (WFF), Wallops Island, Va. The backup launch date is June 10. All of the experiments will be recovered and returned to the students a few hours after launch.

"This project allows students of various ages to interact and share the experience of space flight," said Dr. Adena Loston, NASA's Associate Administrator for Education. "With this mission, these young explorers will return to school with a renewed excitement in their studies, which we hope will lead them to careers in science and engineering."

"The students in this program may one day be the scientists and engineers exploring the moon, Mars and beyond, " said Lynn Marra, NASA Student Involvement Program (NSIP) manager. "This is another step for them to apply their skills and knowledge in their exploration quests," she added.

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The experiments were designed and built by the students. They will examine interference by space and spacecraft on magnetic measurements; the effect of suborbital flight on living cells; fluid interaction during rocket flight conditions; impact of rocket flight on mechanical devices; the effects of rocket flight on various materials including electronic storage devices; the development of static electricity during the flight on materials; and the ability to communicate with the rocket during flight using cell phones.

"We want the students to be involved in all aspects of conducting a rocket launch," said Phil Eberspacher, chief of the Sounding Rocket Program at WFF. "These students are living the life of a 'rocket scientist,'" he said.

The students are from schools in Georgia, Minnesota, Illinois, Alaska, West Virginia, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont and Connecticut. Four of the participating schools are NASA Explorer Schools. In addition to viewing the rocket launch, the students will tour WFF, a sub-facility of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

The launch will be webcast beginning at 5:15 a.m. EDT, on launch day. To view the launch day activities via the Internet, visit:

<http://www.wff.nasa.gov/webcast>

For information about NSIP on the Internet, visit:

<http://education.nasa.gov/nsip>

For information about NASA Explorer Schools on the Internet, visit:

<http://explorerschools.nasa.gov>

For information about NASA and agency programs on the Internet, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov>